

WRITE-IN CANDIDATE FOR NOVEMBER 3, 2026 GENERAL ELECTION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can a write-in candidate be on a primary election ballot?

No. (Section 115.453(5), RSMo.)

If a candidate runs in a primary election and loses, can the person run in the general election for the same office?

No. If a candidate files for nomination to an office and is not nominated at a primary election, that candidate cannot file a declaration of intent to be a write-in candidate for the same office at the general election. (Section 115.453(4), RSMo.)

Are write-in candidates posted at the polling place?

No. The election authority is required to furnish a list to the election judges and counting teams, before Election Day, of all write-in candidates who have filed a declaration of intent. (Section 115.453(4), RSMo.)

Are write-in votes counted for every name that is written in?

No. If a candidate is on the ballot for an office, write-in votes are counted only for the candidates who have filed a declaration of intent to be a write-in candidate with the proper election authority. (Section 115.453(4), RSMo.) If no candidate is on the ballot for an office, a declaration of intent is not required and votes are counted for every name properly written in. (Section 115.453(4), RSMo.)

What if the voter casts a vote for a candidate on the ballot and properly writes in the name of someone for the same office?

In this case, no candidate for the office shall be counted because this is considered an over vote. If a distinguishing mark appears next to the names of more candidates for an office than are entitled to fill the office, no candidate for the office shall be counted as voted for. (Section 115.453(2), RSMo.)